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Summer | 09

Aggregate Activities of Progressive Organizations in 2008

Compilation of Data from Catalist Subscribers

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PREFACE

Limitations of This Analysis

Context. The 2008 election was about the candidacy of Barack Obama. The candidate, his powerful message, and his campaign's ability to connect with voters stand as the central and determining factors in any analysis of this election. The analyses presented in this report are intended as a view of the election from a data perspective, but the impact of the messenger and message cannot readily be isolated, and absolutely must be taken into consideration, when trying to draw any conclusions from the data presented here.

Furthermore, even as we are confident that the analyses below shed light on the effects of various programs, we are also aware that these analyses are incomplete and partial. We will discuss the specific limitations of the analyses as we go, but would highlight two general caveats from the start – the need to recognize that programs often operate in very different environments (different "on the ground" realities) and that programs often have very different costs. These differences in context are often hard to measure, and cost data are often unavailable to us.

Completeness. Catalist provided data services to more than 90 customers during the 2008 election cycle, which represents a substantial portion of the progressive community's activities. Because Catalist users submitted much of their work to the Catalist database, but may not have stored all of their data with Catalist, these numbers should not be considered comprehensive, all-inclusive, or representative of all progressive activities. Catalist maintained a data set of 260 million person records during this Election cycle, and stored multiple snapshots of the entire electorate at various points during the campaign, but Catalist's data set does not yet include everything we wish we could provide for analyses and does not include a snapshot from every day in 2008 – this also puts some limits on the depth of some analyses.

Enormous strides have been made over past election cycles in the collection and aggregation of data. And this time the data assets are being stored and mined for the future, rather than being tossed in the trash. But much improvement is still possible in the rigorous collection and cataloging of data (more time-stamping to cite one simple example) which will vastly improve analyses in the future. The whole progressive community did a much better job of data husbandry this time, but we can do much better still in the years ahead and reap even greater benefits. Catalist sees this as a central part of its mission, and is already implementing new protocols and collaborations aimed at this important goal.

About This Report

This 2008 post-election report is based on the most up-to-date information in Catalist's database. It reflects the work of over 90 progressive organizations, unions, campaigns, and party committees that contracted with Catalist during the 2007-2008 presidential cycle (see Appendix for a client list). Many of these subscribers themselves represent scores of additional candidates, coalition partners and affiliates. These progressive stakeholders uploaded information from their voter contact and civic engagement work into Catalist's database, resulting in a very substantial total data set. On the whole, progressives completed over 127 million contacts to more than 49 million unique individuals[1]. Of these, 28 million voted on Election Day, representing over 20% of all votes cast. Furthermore, and of greater significance, is that 82% of this work occurred in 16 swing states, accounting for 37%[2] of all votes cast in these states[3]. The results described in this report strongly indicate that progressive activities had positive effects, and in some places were essential to progressive victories.

By aggregating their information, progressives that contract with Catalist are helping to paint an increasingly, more accurate picture of the American electorate benefitting both the participating organizations and the entire progressive community. These analyses are made entirely possible by the hard work of each of Catalist's customers. None of this could occur without their outstanding efforts, tremendous dedication, and profound belief in what they do. We offer our thanks to each of them for putting their faith in us and giving us the opportunity to help support them as they make a difference in our nation.

[1] These are conservative statistics and represent contacts that are 100% confirmed.
[2] Catalist does not have Virginia's 2008 vote history and therefore is underreporting the number of people who were contacted in the battleground states and turned out.
[3] This refers to 16 states: CO, FL, GA, IA, IN, MI, MN, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, VA and WI.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 election cycle witnessed significant – and possibly unprecedented[4] – progressive activity. The following statistics are from Catalist's database of progressive activities from over 90 organizations, campaigns, and candidate committees:

Overview:

- Progressives completed over 127 million contacts to over 49 million unique individuals. Of these individuals, 28 million voted on Election Day, representing over 20% of all votes cast.
- 82% of progressive activities occurred in 16 highly contested states[5]. Individuals contacted by progressives accounted for 37%[6] of all votes cast in these states.
- Progressives accumulated over 60 million pieces of response data[7] from over 35 million unique individuals.
- Progressives attempted to contact over 106 million people, meaning that over 46% of the U.S. adult population were targets of communication from the progressive community. These attempted contacts include mail whose receipt was not confirmed and phone calls where someone other than the intended party may have been reached.
- Presidential ID[8] activity by progressives reached over 15 million people – an 80% increase from IDs recorded in 2004.
- Catalist customers were responsible for generating over 7 million voter registration applications, over 5.5 million of which made it onto voter rolls. Of these, 3.8 million new registrants voted.
- The progressive community used sophisticated modeling techniques to drive voter-targeting decisions, the effects of which can be seen in the data.

Footprint:

- Obama did better where more progressive registration and persuasion work occurred;

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[4] It is impossible to conclusively make a historical comparison between the 2008 election cycle and past election cycles because records preserved from the past are too limited.
[5] These states include: CO, FL, GA, IA, IN, MI, MN, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, VA, WI.
[6] This is underreporting the number of people who were contacted in battleground states and turned out, because laws specific to VA have prevented us from using the state's 2008 vote history in this report.
[7] The term *response data* refers to individual voter information that was gathered via two-way communication. Usually, this occurs when a person answers a question that is posed to him or her. A typical question is, "if the election were held today, who do you intend to vote for?"
[8] The term *presidential ID* refers to asking someone which presidential candidate he or she is going to vote for.

- There was significant expansion of progressive activity into states that had not received attention in past cycles.
- Down-ballot races in states such as Alabama, Kentucky, and Louisiana led to the emergence of progressive activities in those states, even though they were not in play for progressives in the presidential race.

Targeting

- Federal and independent groups used new and sophisticated methods to drive targeting decisions. Results show that targeting was much more comprehensive in 2008 compared to 2004, stretching across a broader and more-varied group of people.
- Results suggest that targeting differences between federal and independent groups, and their new, sophisticated data, were complementary.

Contact & Turnout:

- Progressive contact activities were concentrated among higher than average turnout voters. Registered voters contacted by progressives turned out at a rate of 74.6%, while individuals who received no progressive contact turned out at 60.4%. In general, federal and independent activities hint at similar effects on turnout.
- Progressive contact is strongly correlated with increases in turnout among sporadic voters.
- Results indicate that turnout increased as people received more contact. The first contact shows the strongest increase, although this may be an effect of other factors such as confirmation of a person's existence or choice of targets.[9] More importantly, with each subsequent contact turnout steadily increases.
- Results support existing academic literature[10] suggesting that in-person canvassing is the most effective method of political communication.
- The number of votes cast by new voters who were registered by progressives exceeded Obama's margin of victory in four states: OH, FL, IN, and NC. Although it is certain that not every voter registered by a progressive organization voted for Obama, if we assume that 60% of them did, the net vote gain for Obama is still greater than the margin of victory in both North Carolina and Indiana.

[9] Without controlled experiments, results inevitably include a bias because those who are unreachable end up in the non-contacted universe, while people who are reachable end up in the contacted universe.

[10] Gerber, Alan & Green, Don. "Get Out The Vote: How To Increase Voter Turnout." The Brookings Institution. Washington DC. 2004.

- When controlling for demographic factors, progressive activities still appear to explain outcome at the county level in a way that demographics alone cannot.
- Progressive contact is associated with increased turnout among sporadic voters, regardless of paid media.

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PROGRESSIVE ACTION IN 2008

The results described in this report reflect the work of stakeholders who contracted with Catalist. While this includes a tremendous amount of high-quality data, it is not all encompassing. We don't claim that the analyses contained herein necessarily extend beyond this particular data set in this particular election. Further it should be noted that most of the data described in this report can show only correlation of outcome with progressive activities. Rigorous proof of these effects, and measurements of their actual magnitudes, can only be shown through carefully designed experiments using appropriate control groups. We are pleased that Catalist data and tools are facilitating an increasing number of such experiments that will generate more sustained learning.[11]

Overview

A classical view of political campaigns is that presidential elections are won and lost on the margins; namely, small percentages of the electorate ultimately determine, or have a disproportionately large affect on, which candidate wins and loses. This view rests on the assumption of a relatively predictable pattern of voting behavior, largely based on party affiliation. Campaigns have assumed that voters can be classified in one of three broad categories. The voter either: (a) supports the candidate; (b) is undecided about which candidate to support; or (c) supports the opposing candidate. Therefore, in order to win, campaigns seek to do two things: (1) make sure their supporters vote on Election Day, and (2) persuade undecided voters to vote for their candidate. Commonly, these practices are referred to as GOTV (Get-Out-The-Vote) and persuasion, respectively. They encompass a variety of activities, all of which are intended to maximize the number of votes a candidate receives on Election Day.

The best methods to execute these practices, and their impact, have long been subjects of scientific study and political debate. Recent experiments and research have produced results that form the beginnings of a new set of best practices. The vast majority of these activities, and their impact, need to be better understood.

[11] The Analyst Institute is a clearinghouse for evidence-based best practices in progressive voter contact. Largely using Catalist data, the Institute assists organizations to build tests into their contact efforts, especially in regard to high-priority topics.

The aftermath of the 2008 presidential election provides a unique opportunity for progressives to examine these unknowns. In this cycle, progressives used data in unprecedented ways. This resulted in new, sophisticated methods to identify voters, which, in turn, created better targeting of resources and program activity. The way this data originated and was later stored allows progressives to measure the scope and effects of these activities in new ways.

Results from this data suggest that the 2008 presidential election cycle marked a milestone in progressive voter engagement activity. Based on data that was loaded into the Catalist databases and then standardized, progressive organizations, the Obama campaign, and federal party committees attempted to contact over 106 million people. This means that the progressive community attempted to contact over 46%[12] of the U.S. adult population. Contacts were delivered in-person, over the phone, by mail, or over the Internet. These do not count any broadcast media by campaigns or organizations.

These traditional top-down forms of voter contact were complemented by a strong bottom-up effort that culminated in over 60 million pieces of response data[13] collected from over 35 million unique individuals (these are individuals for whom the contact resulted in response data). During the 2004 election cycle, we know that ACT and the Kerry campaign contacted at least 8.5 million unique individuals[14]. In contrast, data stored by all progressive groups (over 90 organizations, campaigns and committees) working with Catalist in the 2008 cycle shows that presidential ID[15] activity alone reached 15,452,954 people – a difference of over 80%. Overall, Catalist customers were responsible for generating over 7 million voter registration applications[16]. They completed over 127 million contacts to over 49 million unique individuals. Of these individuals, 28 million voted on Election Day, representing over 20% of all votes cast. Furthermore, 82% of progressive

[12] According to US Census population estimates. http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html

[13] The term *response data* refers to individual voter information that was gathered via two-way communication. Usually, this occurs when a person answers a question that is posed to him or her. A typical question is, "if the election were held today, who do you intend to vote for?"

[14] According to data stored by ACT and the Kerry campaign of all ID activity during the 2004 election cycle. While it is difficult to compare the scope of progressive activity in 2008 to that of 2004 (due to the limited data that was stored in past cycles), there is enough quality data available to make some broad comparisons.

[15] The term *presidential ID* refers to asking someone which presidential candidate he or she is going to vote for.

[16] This refers to total applications generated. It is not the total number of applications that appeared on Election Day voter rolls.

activities occurred in 16 highly contested states[17]. Progressives contacted 37%[18] of all the people who voted in the 16 battlegrounds.

These statistics are a consequence of the most aggressive progressive voter contact activity on record and can be attributed to the confluence of a number of factors (that are, generally speaking, distinctly unique to this election cycle). These factors include a central candidate with extraordinary voter appeal coupled with a campaign apparatus with extraordinary discipline and proficiency in organizing and message delivery at the individual-level. These central factors were supported by highly sophisticated, innovative modeling that allowed for smarter targeting of resources at the individual-level; more widely dispersed knowledge of GOTV best practices grounded in scientific research; a sustained approach of highly coordinated, long-term planning by the progressive community; and extensive first-time ever data infrastructure in place well in advance of the general election.

Across the country, we see a very strong correlation between progressive victories and intense progressive activities. Note the preceding statement that the data demonstrates very strong "correlations," but not certain "causality," between progressive activities and positive political outcomes. The data in-hand, for the most part, is still insufficient to do more than indicate probable "causality" in some cases, but not certain causality across the board. Without testing imbedded in the programs that hold out "control groups" against which to measure program effects – the positive correlations we see clearly in the data might be attributed to either targeting people already likely to vote the way we want, or program activities causing the positive response or some combination of both. More in-cycle testing against control groups, as well as much more rigorous collection and tagging of contact and response data would substantially improve the progressive community's ability to separate correlation and causality with more accuracy. We have made great progress – we need to make more.

This report uses Catalist's extensive database to examine progressive activities in the 2008 election cycle[19]. It will review the scope and effects of these activities in an attempt to further understand the story of this election, how data was used in it, and what needs to be further studied and explored.

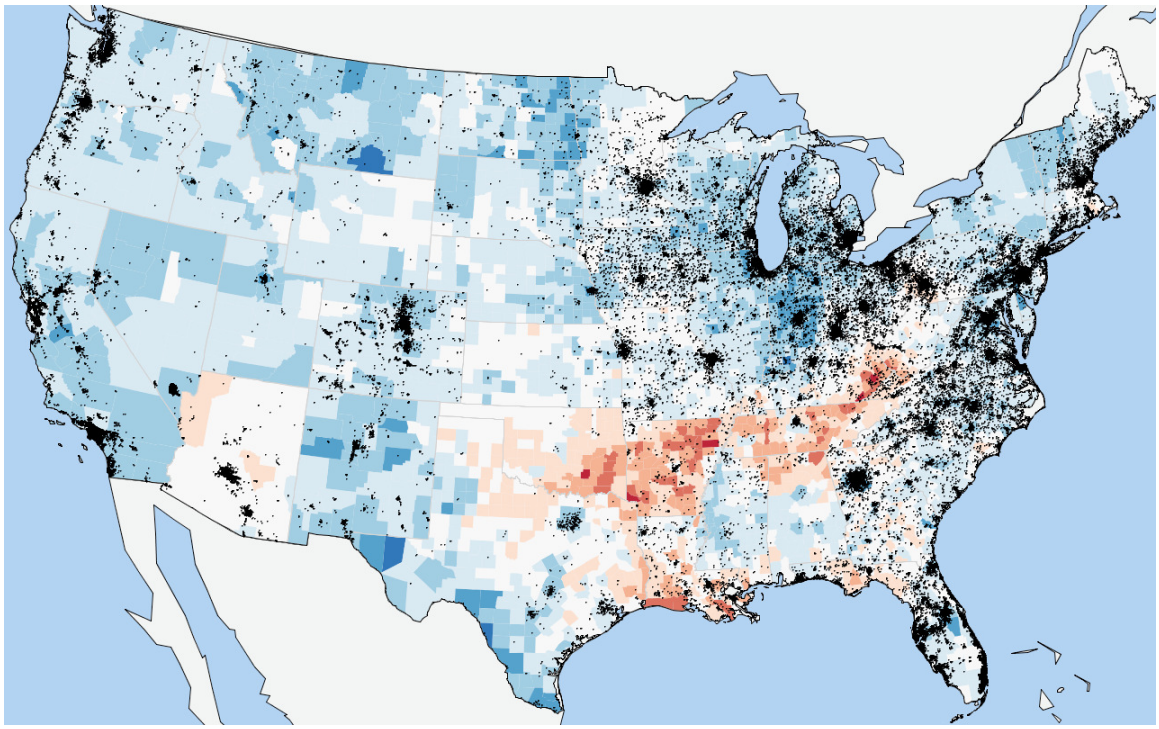
[17] These states include: CO, FL, GA, IA, IN, MI, MN, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, VA and WI.
[18] This is underreporting the number of people who were contacted in battleground states and turned out, because laws specific to VA have prevented us from using the state's 2008 vote history in this report.
[19] All references to "2008" or the "2008 election cycle" covers all activities from 2007 – 2008.

The Progressive Footprint

The 2008 election cycle marked a period of notable progressive geographic expansion. A number of states that previously had not seen significant progressive activity ultimately became the focus of sizeable persuasion and registration programs. Catalist data indicates that the expansion of progressive activity in these states – including North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Nevada – was matched by positive Election Day outcomes. Furthermore, down-ballot activity in states such as Alabama, Kentucky, and Louisiana resulted in progressive activities in those states, even though they were not in play for progressives in the presidential race. It is our hope that data from these down-ballot activities can be applied to future races.

The map in Figure 1 is a visual portrayal of this phenomenon. It shows the footprint of progressive activity during the 2008 election cycle, set against differences in county-level performance between Obama and Kerry. Blue shading indicates a county where Obama outperformed Kerry, while red shading indicates a county where Kerry outperformed Obama; as shades get progressively darker they indicate a more superior performance by that candidate. The black clusters overlaid on top of this map represent the intensity of progressive contact work during the 2008 election cycle.

Figure 1: Progressive Footprint of the 2008 Presidential Election Cycle



Progressive activities in key swing states correlate to increases in Democratic performance.

Close inspection of battleground states indicates a significant correlation that can be mathematically confirmed between the areas that received progressive contact in 2008 (the black clusters) and those counties that moved toward Obama (the blue shades). Furthermore, data indicates that this correlation also exists for the amount of progressive registration activity. In sum, the more progressive registration and persuasion work that occurred, the better the outcome was for Obama. While correlation is not proof of causality, this could be an indication of improved targeting – progressives were working in the areas they could, and did win. Wasting fewer resources on those not likely to respond is in itself an important advance, but more measurements to better understand which treatments are most effective in persuading and mobilizing likely responders is the next area of opportunity for progress.

More Effective Targeting

Progressives made significant advances in voter targeting compared to previous cycles. This created new voter engagement opportunities and ultimately provided a critical boost to overall progressive operations during the 2008 election cycle.

Previously, progressives' ability to target individual voters was limited when compared to the 2008 cycle. They relied largely on voter files and voter file data, such as party registration and vote history, to find potential targets. Past precinct level Democratic performance, party registration, and polls were the most common methods used to identify *target geographies* and *target demographic groups*, rather than target individuals. These target *areas/groups* were then "ID'ed" – all voters in the target areas or groups would be contacted individually to determine likely support, and then on that basis added to voter contact programs for either persuasion or for get-out-the-vote efforts. Similarly, and far too often, phone ID programs limited follow-up efforts to those who could be reached and, among them, responded in a given way. That means a small subset (type of response) of a subset (reachable) of a subset (those with phones).

The 2008 cycle was different. For the first time during a presidential election cycle, progressives developed and relied on highly sophisticated, innovative modeling at a large scale. Increased access to, and usage of, these models changed this approach, and were critical to progressive success. These models predicted, among other things, candidate support and likelihood to vote *at an individual level*. The resulting data was used to target specific individuals to ID, persuade and turn out to vote, allowing organizations to repurpose the substantial resources devoted to simply "IDing" voters and skip straight to using precious resources to contact the right people for persuasion or get-out-the-vote.

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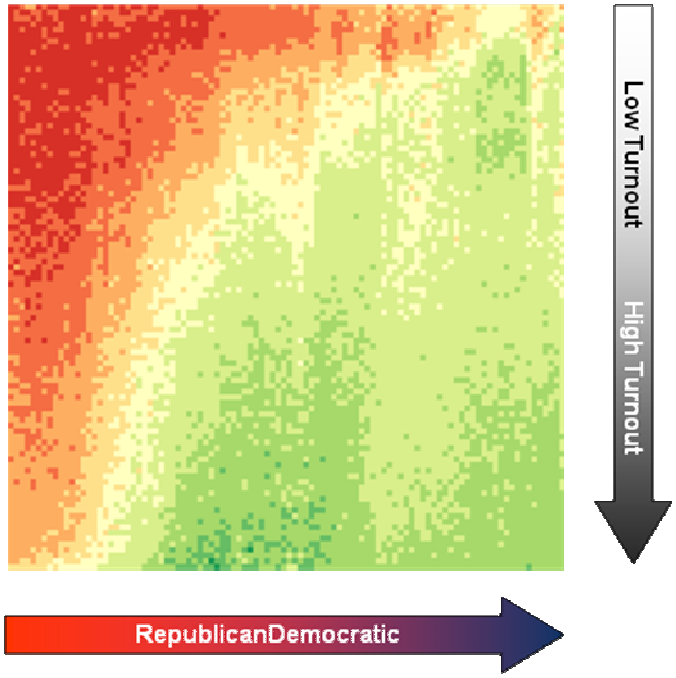
Furthermore, the progressive organizations, campaigns and committees that used this method of targeting broadened their pool of potential targets – breaking out of reliable geographies and demographic groups. Individuals that previously would not have been seen as possible targets – such as likely progressive supporters living in very Republican precincts – could now be identified and targeted. Likewise, unlikely progressive supporters that lived in progressive base neighborhoods (or who were in a base demographic group) could be identified and removed from targeting lists, saving more resources to contact better targets. This enhanced method of targeting has generated more efficient and cost effective programs.

This method of targeting can be visually illustrated in a heat map. Because modeling allows us to give every individual voter a model "score" that predicts their likelihood (relative to all other voters) to have a particular attribute – such as likelihood to be a Democrat, as an example. This, therefore, allows us to place every voter on a grid according to their individual scores. These maps plot the voters according to their Catalist Voting Propensity Model[20] and Catalist Partisanship Model[21]. This is shown in Figure 2, below, which shows Ohio voters in 2008. The X-axis places each voter according to their likelihood of being a Democrat or Republican, with the strongest likely Democrats on the right. The Y-axis places each voter according to their likelihood to turnout to vote, with strongest likely voters at the bottom. Taken together, this means that a highly probable Democrat who is very likely to vote would be in the lower right corner. The red and green coloring on top of this grid represents the *amount* of contact[22] that each individual received[23]. Green indicates more contact and red indicates less contact, with darker colors showing more intensive contact.

[20] The Catalist Voting Propensity Model was built to predict an individual's likelihood to vote in a generic presidential election.
[21] The Catalist Partisanship Model is an individual-level model that predicts an individual's likelihood to identify as a Republican or Democrat.
[22] When discussing these maps, it should be noted that the word "contact" actually refers to "relative contact". Relative contact refers to how over- or under-represented progressive contact was among individuals with that partisanship and vote propensity combination.
[23] This is done by comparing names and addresses to the voter contact information delivered by organizations loading data with Catalist.

Figure 2: Progressive Contact in Ohio, 2008



Sophisticated modeling allowed for smarter targeting in 2008. The dark green patches indicate the identification of, and heavy targeting to, two critical groups: (a) high-turnout swing voters, and (b) low-turnout, loyal Democrats.

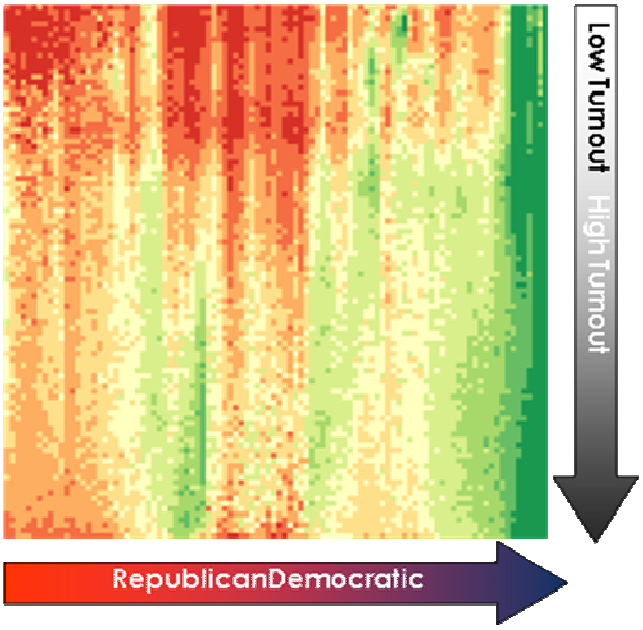
The dark green patch in the lower-middle section of Figure 2 shows a highly concentrated pattern of contact among individuals that are very likely to vote, but whose partisanship is not strongly known. These individuals would seem to be obvious targets for persuasion. Similarly, the patch of green in the upper-right corner of the map shows a concentrated pattern of contact among low-turnout Democrats, which indicate likely GOTV targets. Together, these patterns clearly indicate that the progressive community actively used models to drive targeting decisions. Alternatively, without sophisticated partisanship and turnout models persuasion and GOTV would not have occurred at customized, individual level. The adoption of micro-targeting-driven strategy in 2008 indicates a significant shift in how the progressive community is approaching campaign targeting.

In order to compare 2008's targeting work to that of the past, Figure 3 shows the voter contact activity recorded in Ohio by the 2004 Kerry campaign and progressive allies. This example clearly displays a pattern of highly concentrated contact among the most partisan Democrats, without regard to their likelihood to vote[24]. As a result, almost every person identified as a

[24] In fact, Ohio is not a party registration state. However, a certain portion of the population can be identified as partisan through their primary participation.

Democrat received contact to the exclusion of most other groups. This pattern demonstrates that individual modeling was not used to identify individual targets; rather, basic voter file information (identifying registered or likely Democrats and reliable demographic groups) and past precinct performance (geography) were generally used to target contact.

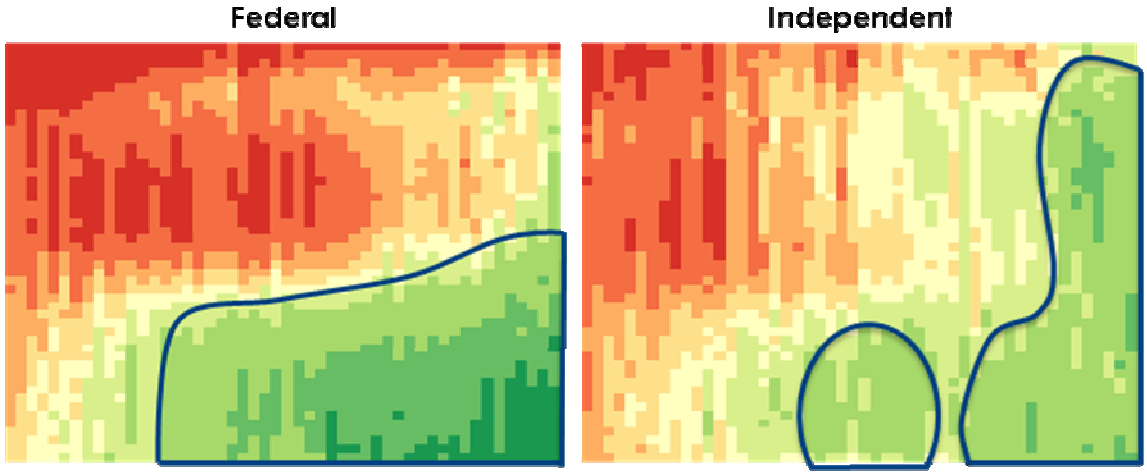
Figure 3: Progressive Contact in Ohio, 2004



The hurdles of traditional targeting methods, on clear display. Here, we see concentrated targeting to a single, niche group of loyal Democrats, with virtually no efforts targeted to voters of unknown partisanship.

Some have asked whether new targeting techniques were employed only by the Presidential campaign. The maps in Figure 4 include activities in all swing states during the 2008 election cycle. Here, activities are split between federal and independent groups (federal groups include campaigns and candidate committees; independent groups include nonprofit organizations, unions, and 527s). The resulting patterns indicate both were using similar techniques. While they did not coordinate activities – by using similar data infrastructure and data driven targeting techniques the focus of their activities can be seen after-the-fact as complimentary.

Figure 4: Targeting Differences Between Federal and Independent Groups, All Battleground States, 2008



Complementary differences in strategic targeting between federal and independent groups.

The heat map on the left suggests that federal activities were more focused on engaging moderate- to high-turnout individuals (as indicated by the green shading on the lower half of the map). In doing so, they targeted a range of high-turnout individuals, from slightly right-of-center weak-partisans to strong Democrats. The emphasis suggests that these federal campaigns and committees largely focused somewhat more on finding and persuading less partisan voters to their cause. It should be noted that the federal data represented in this plot cannot be confirmed as a complete representation of their activities.

The independent groups' heat map (on the right) suggests a different pattern of activity. Here, the darkened area toward the top-right corner indicates that activities were more targeted to low-turnout individuals, but who were stronger Democratic partisans. Comparing the two maps does indicate some overlap of activity. Their similarities and differences, however, strongly suggest that the efforts of the entire progressive community were mutually reinforcing and complimentary.

Measurable Effects

Progressives can now concretely measure political outcome against their voter contact activities using Catalist data. The current Catalist data set has already been updated to add 2008 individual voter turnout to its voter files for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. To be clear, the majority of these effects are correlational in nature and do not broadly establish causality.

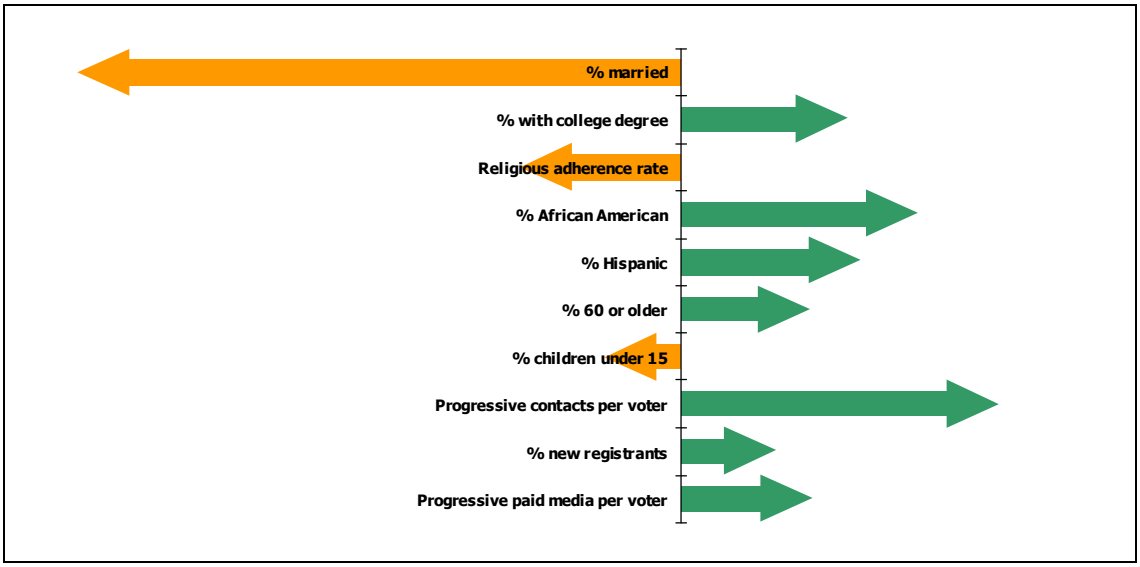
Can We Establish Causality?

No. But we're getting closer then ever before.

We cannot know causality in a post-hoc analysis. We can only know correlation. But with multivariate regression and convergence across multiple approaches we can get ever closer to causality. This is because there are always alternate interpretations. The only way to isolate causality is a truly random-assignment experiment which involves a treatment group and a control group. We are glad that Catalist's infrastructure is supporting an ever-growing body of research on this, led by the Analyst Institute. Despite these caveats, the strength and variety of the correlative relationships in the ensuing data indicate a strong link between contact work and outcomes.

Figure 5, below, goes one step further in showing the correlative relationships between contact work and outcomes. Catalist used a regression analysis to evaluate the effect of observed county-level demographic characteristics, contact and registration activity, and paid media on Obama's share of each county's vote. This type of multivariate analysis controls for the other observed characteristics when determining each factor's influence on Obama's vote share so we can have greater confidence that the magnitude and significance of each factor's influence is independent of the other factors. The green bars indicate positive influence and orange bars indicate negative influence. This chart clearly indicates that, even when controlling for known demographic factors, progressive activities still explained outcome at the county level in a way that demographics alone cannot.

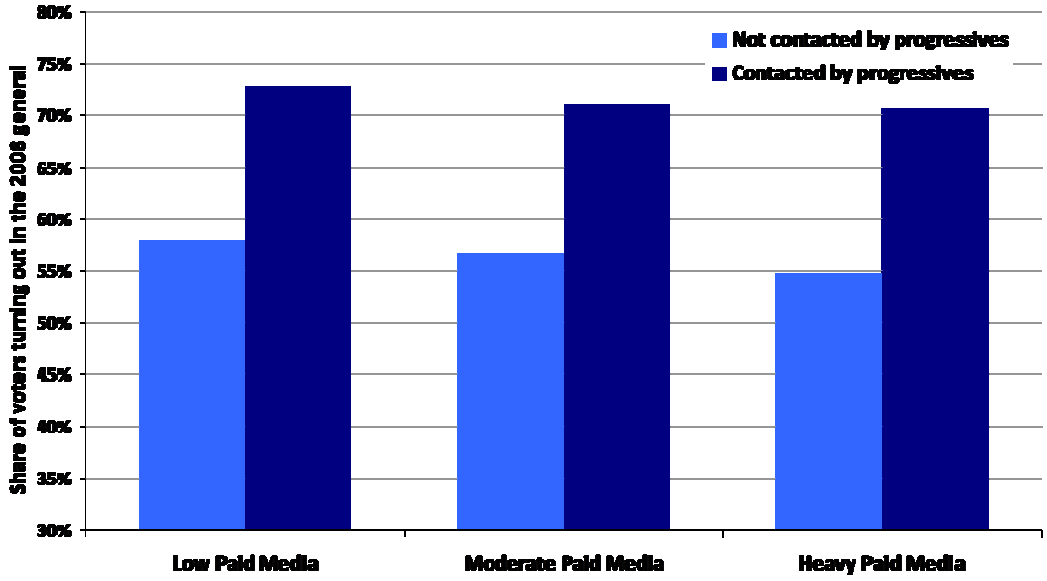
Figure 5: Influence of County-Level Demographic Factors, Contact, Registration, and Paid Media on Obama Vote Outcome, 2008



These county-level observations generally align with exit poll results. Furthermore, the three unique categories – progressive contacts per voter, percent new registrants, and progressive paid media per voter – all had positive effects on Obama's vote outcome. By controlling for demographics and combining them with the three unique categories, it is possible to explain outcome in a way that demographics alone cannot. While this does not establish causality, it is more evidence that such a link exists.

There are other examples that argue towards establishing causality. Figure 6, below, shows the turnout of sporadic Democratic voters based on the amount of paid media they received. The light blue bars were sporadic Democratic voters who received no progressive contact, while the dark blue bars represent sporadic Democratic voters who received progressive contact.

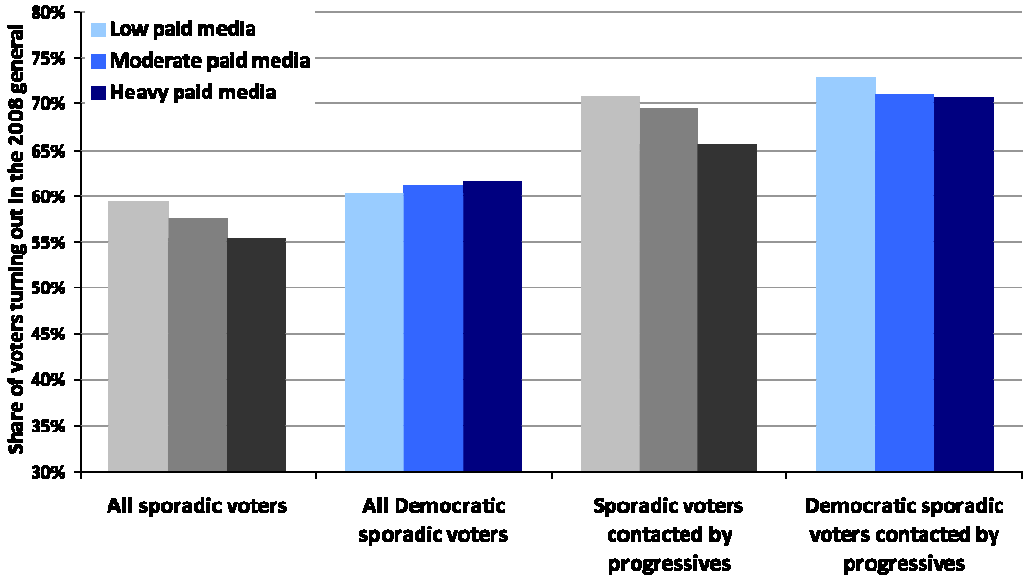
Figure 6: Turnout Among Sporadic Democratic Voters, 2008



While Figure 6, above, is helpful in establishing corelational effects, it only measures sporadic Democratic voters. Below, Figure 7 looks at the turnout of all sporadic voters (including Democrats, Independents, and Republicans), comparing turnout based on the amount of paid media they received. The results from Figure 6 hold true in Figure 7, as we can clearly see that progressive contact correlated with boosted turnout, regardless of total paid media levels[25].

[25] Includes Republican and Democratic paid media.

Figure 7: Effect of Paid Media on All Sporadic Voters, 2008



The results indicate that, regardless of the amount of paid media received, progressive contact is correlated with significant increases in turnout. Thus, it can be argued that the turnout rates of these individuals are not attributable to media alone, and that progressive contact effects turnout. Again, this does not definitively establish causal impact, but it provides more evidence.

In the charts above, you may notice effects in the data that indicate more media pushed turnout down. It is important to remember that the areas where the media battle was most intense likely included a very large amount of media generally, but also a large amount of negative media that potentially created a drag on turnout. However, the context is key, as a reduction in media by one side would only leave the airtime open for the other side to monopolize.

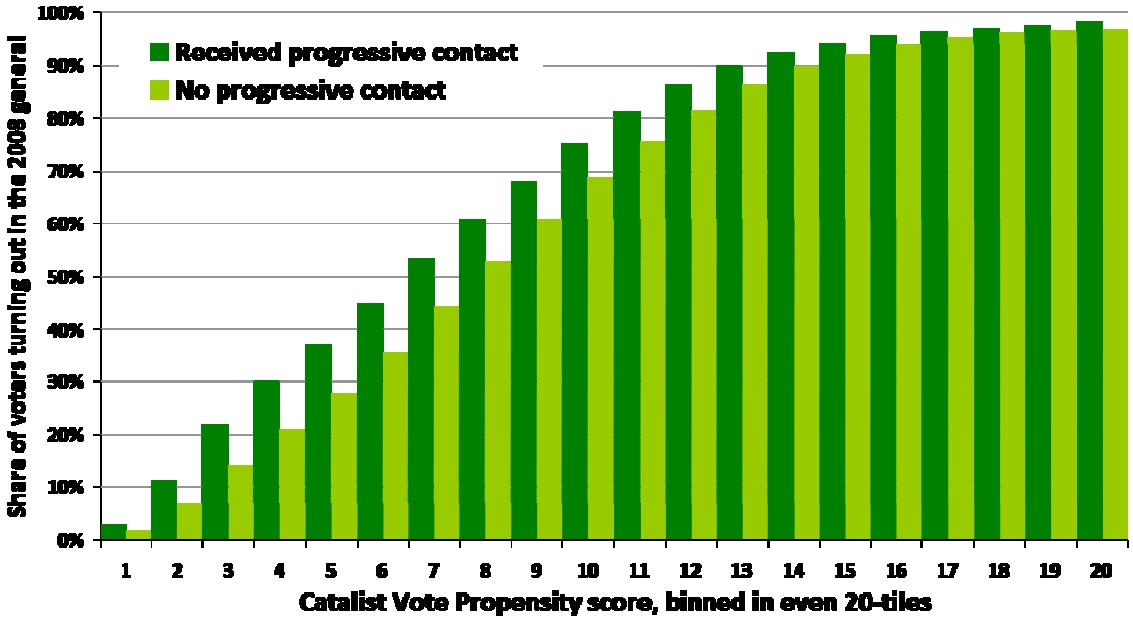
Contact & Voter Turnout

PLEASE NOTE: It is important to note that the nature of Figures 8 – 11 inherently favor individuals who are likely to vote. The results reflect people who have been identified as reachable targets by Catalist. Similarly, low contact may indicate that someone is not *able* to vote, for whatever reason (including change of address, illness, death, etc.). As a result, increases in the charts, below, may be attributed to other causes. More importantly they likely overstate the actual effect of any contact work and should not be used as a measure of the actual impact. We encourage the widespread use of

controlled experiments to complement this data in order to further understand the results.

Using Catalist's database, the outcome of voter contact work can be analyzed by comparing the results of voter contact activities to actual turnout. Figure 8 provides a visual example of this. Here, levels of actual voter turnout (Y-axis) are matched against Catalist's predicted turnout levels[26] for two groups (X-axis): individuals that received progressive contact, represented by the dark green bars; and individuals that did not receive contact, represented by the light green bars.

Figure 8: Turnout Rates Between Registered Voters Receiving Progressive Contact vs. Not Receiving Progressive Contact



Progressive contact led to increases in turnout when controlling for predicted turnout based on past elections.

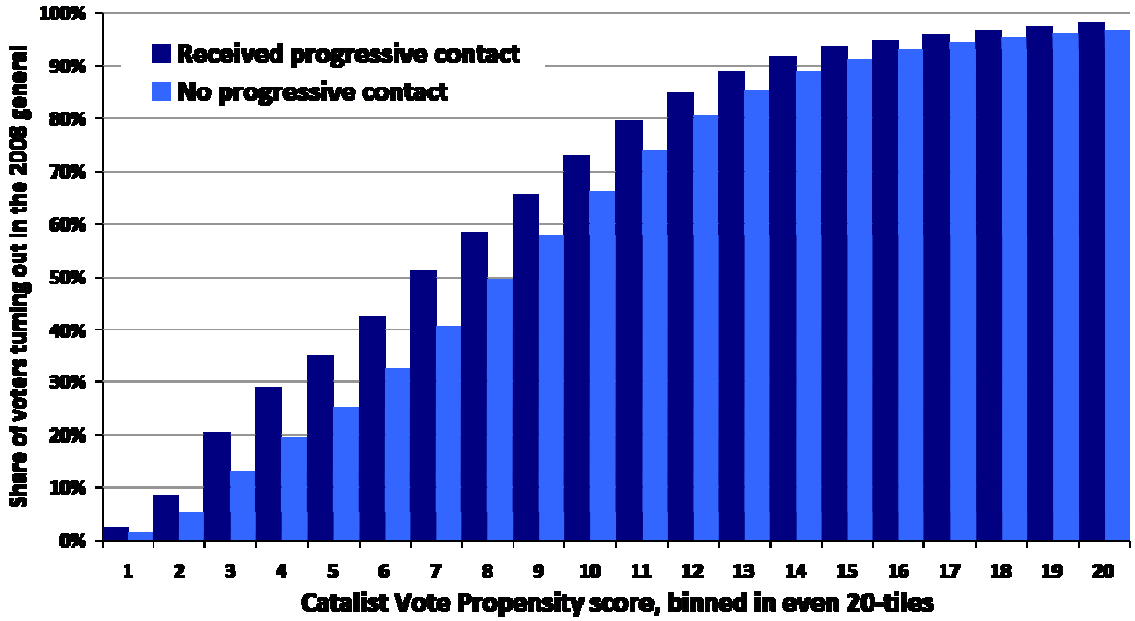
Figure 8, above, indicates an increase in actual turnout among persons who received progressive contact when controlling for predicted turnout based upon past elections. This is most pronounced among people less likely to vote, and in many cases represents an increase in turnout of over eight percentage points. It is possible that this increase in turnout is due to better targeting: those more likely to turnout than in the past were appropriately targeted. Similarly the effects of being a reachable contact noted at the

[26] Predicted levels of turnout are based on the Catalist Voting Propensity Model, shown here evenly binned within each state.

beginning of this section should be considered and the magnitudes seen here should not be taken as a measure of effectiveness.

Increases in turnout among those contacted could also potentially be explained by noting that Democrats, who were the primary recipients of these contacts, were generally more enthusiastic in this election and turned out at a higher rate than Republicans. Figure 9, below tests this hypothesis. It removes Republicans and compares turnout between registered Democrats that received progressive contact (dark blue) to registered Democrats that received no progressive contact (light blue). This graph clearly indicates that the increase in turnout is still maintained and cannot be explained by party enthusiasm alone.

Figure 9: Turnout Rates of Registered Voters Between Democrats Contacted by Progressives vs. Democrats Not Contacted by Progressives, 2008



The previous graphs strongly suggest that progressive contact is correlated with increased voter turnout, even when controlling for likelihood to vote based upon historical data. However, it is still unclear whether there were key differences within the progressive community itself. One way to learn about these differences is by comparing the results of federal groups and independent groups (as was done with the heat maps in Figure 4 of the previous section).

Figure 10: Effects of Contact on Turnout of Registered Voters by Federal Groups, 2008

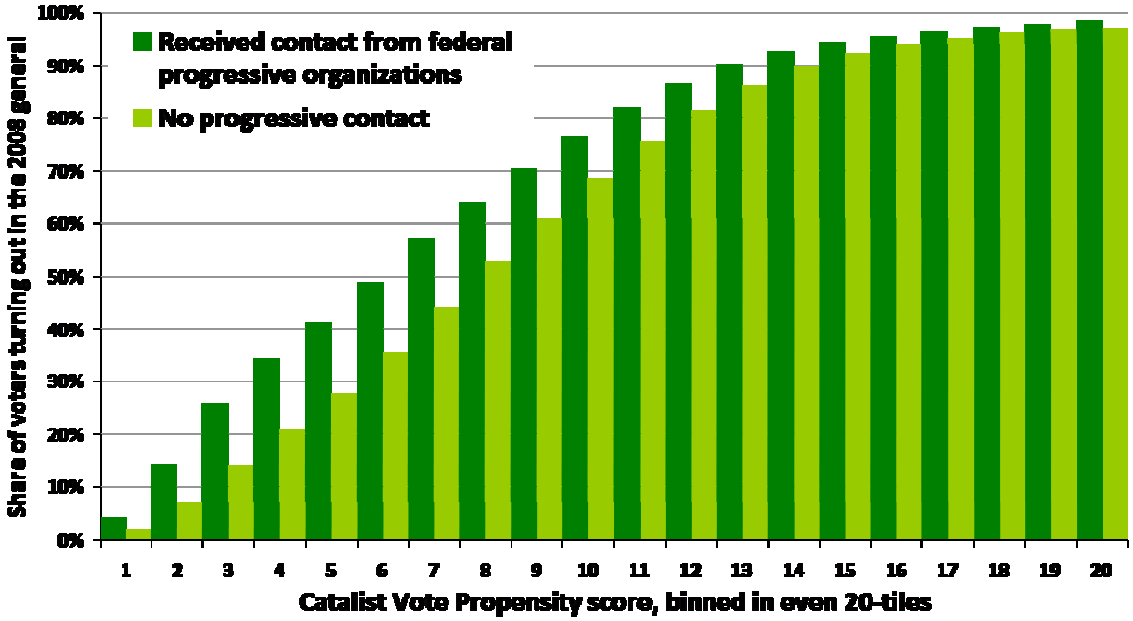
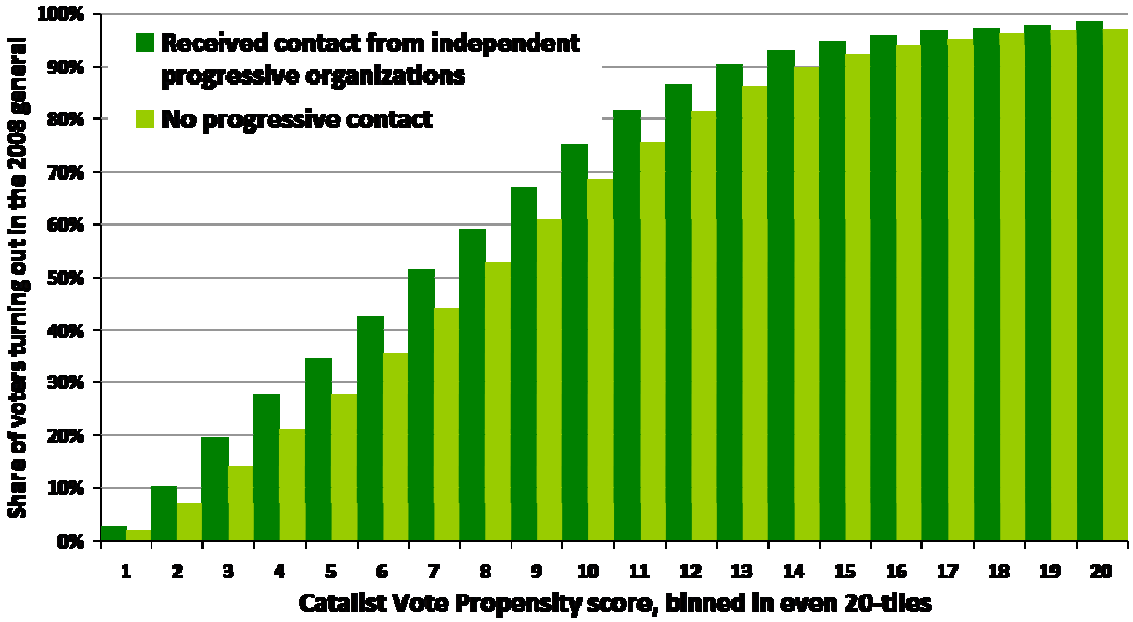


Figure 11: Effects of Contact on Turnout of Registered Voters by Independent Groups, 2008



Overall, these two graphs are generally quite similar. It should be noted, however, that underlying group of voters being contacted was somewhat different. Among those contacted by federal groups (Figure 10) turnout was 19 percentage points higher than those not contacted by any progressive

group (79.4% vs. 60.4%). Turnout among those contacted by independent groups (Figure 11) was 12 percentage points higher than those not contacted by a progressive group (72.4% vs. 60.4%). This indicates some difference in who was targeted for contact. The federal groups appeared to target, on average, individuals more likely to vote than those targeted by the independent groups. This suggests that the activities of federal groups may have emphasized persuasion, which corresponds with the heat maps in Figure 4.

Understanding how progressive voter contact work affected sporadic voters' turnout is another way to assess the effects of these activities. The term "sporadic voters" refers to people who voted in the most recent presidential election but who did not vote in the mid-term elections. In this case, the term refers to people who voted in the 2004 presidential election but who did not vote in the 2006 mid-term elections. From a campaign's perspective, these voters fit into one of two general profiles. They either (a) tend to be less polarized, and somewhat more moderate then people who voted in both elections, but can be counted on to vote in the current election; or (b) they are highly partisan, but require outside efforts to galvanize them to vote on election day. Consequently, sporadic voters are crucial targets of any campaign, as they match the audience profile of persuasion and GOTV activities. Figure 12, below, shows the effects of partisanship and progressive contact activities on sporadic voters' turnout rates.

Figure 12: Effect of Contact on Sporadic Voters, 2008

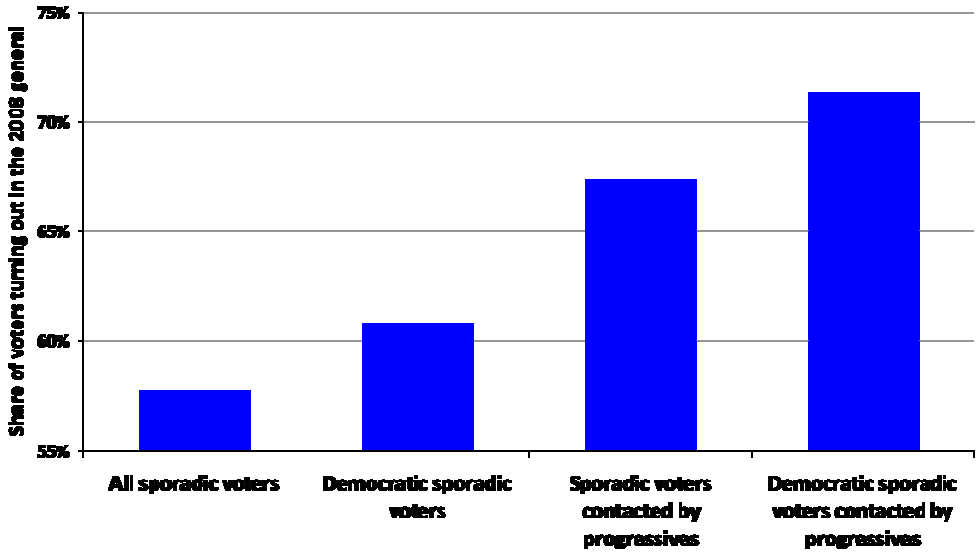


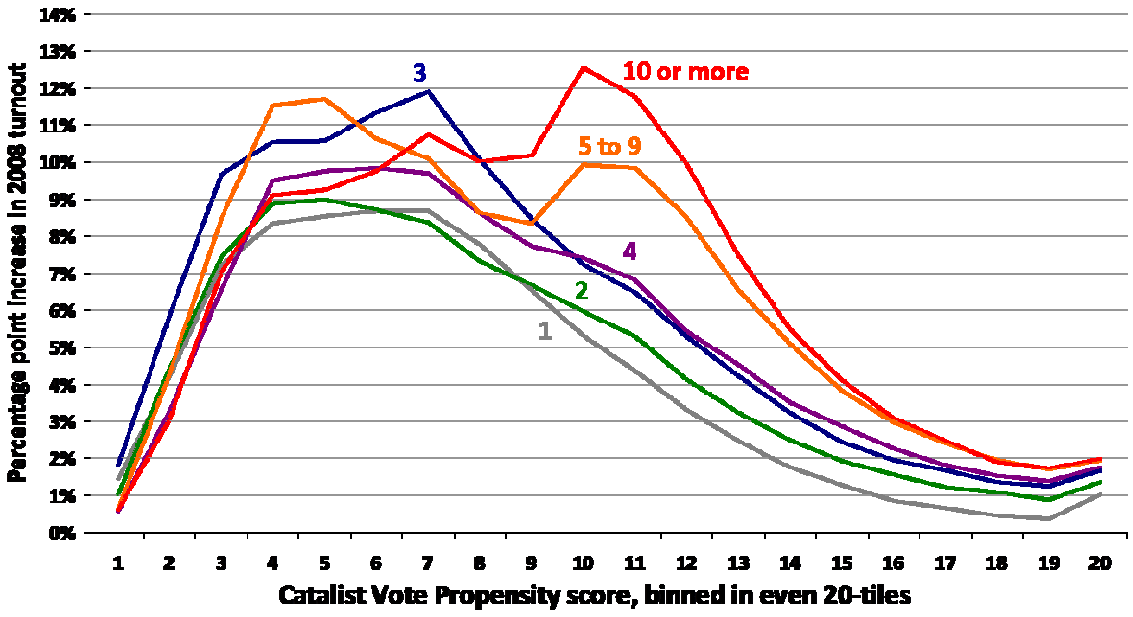
Figure 12 suggests that there was a positive correlation between progressive contact and sporadic voter turnout. Among all sporadic voters (which include

Democrats, Independents, and Republicans), progressive contact is correlated with a 10-point increase in turnout. Among just Democratic sporadic voters, progressive contact shows an 11-point difference.

The results described thus far pertain to voter contact in its most general form. Another way to view the data is to look at the type and quantity of contacts received by a particular voter. Is more contact associated with a higher likelihood to vote? Is an in-person canvas more correlated with an increase in turnout than a piece of mail?

The chart in Figure 13, below, illustrates the relationship between turnout and frequency of contact. Here, the Y-axis represents the percentage point increase in turnout; the X-axis[27] represents likelihood to turn out. The chart strongly suggests that increased turnout is correlated with increased contact. It is important to note that the strong affect of the first contact could be explained by the actual targeting done for who receives contact and their confirmed reachability rather than being a measurable impact. The continued increase in turnout among those receiving more contact provides some interesting evidence for actual effects from these activities, however.

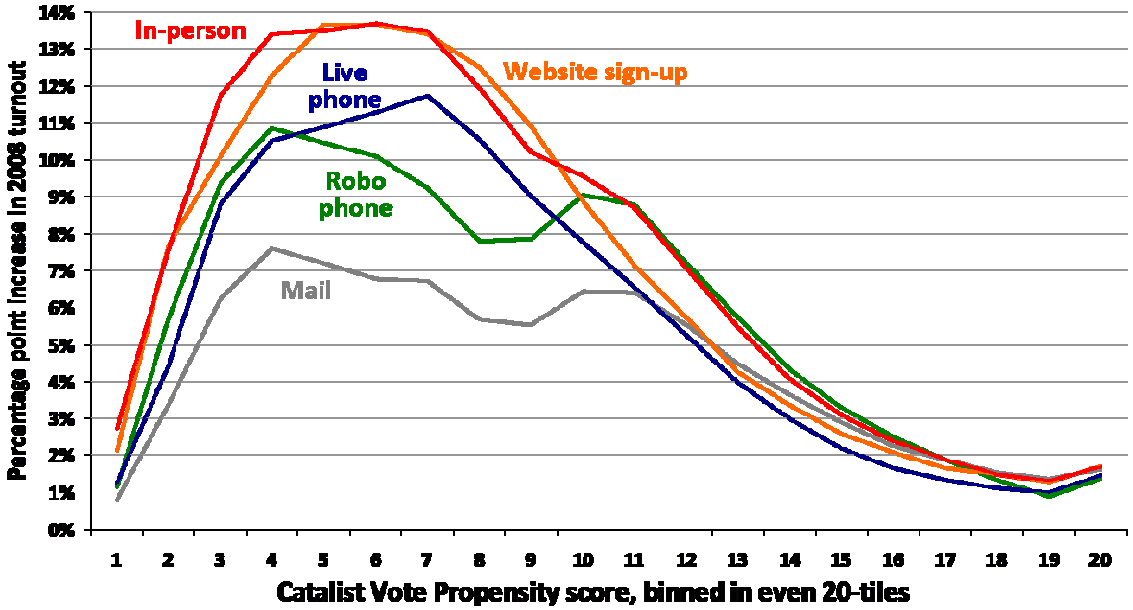
Figure 13: Increase in Turnout Based on Amount of Contact, 2008



[27] Turnout predictions are based on the Catalist Voting Propensity Model.

Similarly, Figure 14 shows the increase in turnout based on the channel of contact. This appears to confirm academic literature[28] suggesting that in-person canvassing is the most effective method of political communication. It should be noted that the web contacts in this graph were actually individuals who signed up voluntarily on web sites and were not those solicited via email[29].

Figure 14: Increase in Turnout Based on Type of Contact, 2008



While these conclusions do not amount to establishing causality, they do suggest strong correlational effects.

Voter Registration

Much of the voter contact work performed during an election comes in the form of registering people to vote. Generally, a campaign would seek to target people who fit a profile that makes them likely to favor the campaign's candidate. Therefore, by registering campaign supporters to vote, the campaign seeks to add to the pool of likely supporting voters on Election Day.

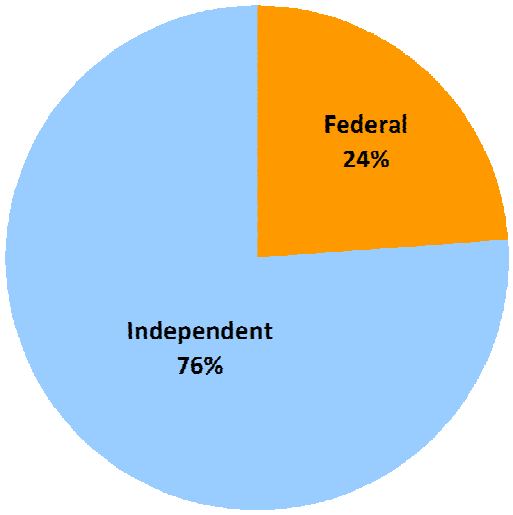
Voter registration is an age-old practice and a staple of any campaign operation. However, gauging the impact of voter registration work has

[28] Gerber, Alan & Green, Don. "Get Out The Vote: How To Increase Voter Turnout." The Brookings Institution. Washington DC. 2004.
[29] Individuals may have received contact from more then one channel.

always been a challenge for a number of reasons. For example, while an individual's name shows up only once on the official Election Day voting rolls, it is possible for someone to submit more then one registration application. As a result, it is technically possible for an individual to be registered by multiple groups, making it difficult to calculate the true number of individual registrations. Other reasons include nuances such as changes of address (both within and outside of a state), and poor data entry that have been historically difficult to track on a large scale. Yet another difficulty lies in the calculation of how many newly registered people actually did vote on Election Day. A centralized database of voter registrations and voter file data allows us to now paint a clearer picture about voter registration work than was possible in years past, and make judgments based on accurate results.

Overall, the progressive community generated over 7 million unique voter registration applications during the 2008 presidential election cycle. Of these, 76% came from independent organizations that were unaffiliated with any campaign or party committee (see Figure 15, below).

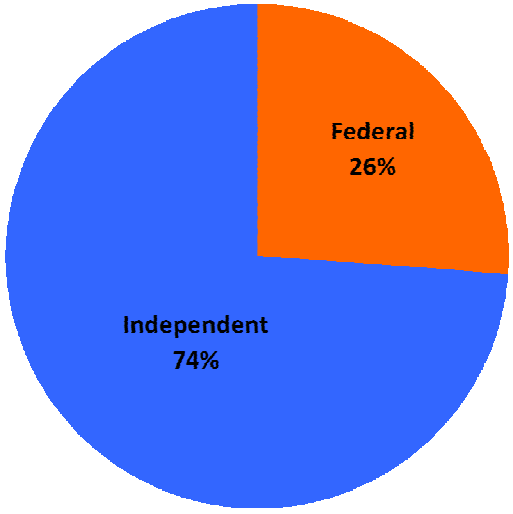
Figure 15: Breakdown of Total Registration Applicants, 2008



Total Registration Applicants: 7,240,737

It is important to note that not all of these applications eventually made it onto the voter file. Of the 7.24 million applications that were submitted, over 5.5 million made it onto the file. These are called true registrations. Figure 16, below, shows the breakdown of true registrations.

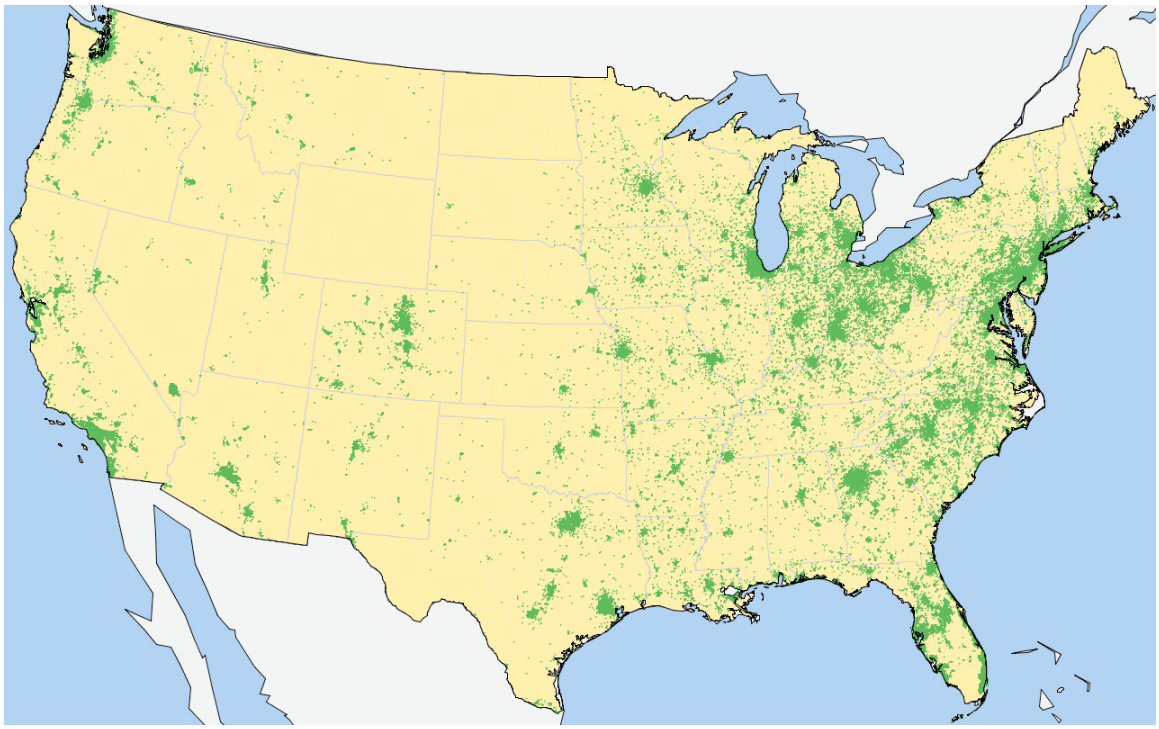
Figure 16: Breakdown of True Registrations, 2008



Total Registration Applicants on File: 5,587,417

While this is an impressive number of registrations, the geographic scope of where this work occurred is equally impressive. The map in Figure 17, below, shows the footprint of progressive voter registration activity. The results indicate that the vast majority of registration work occurred in key swing states.

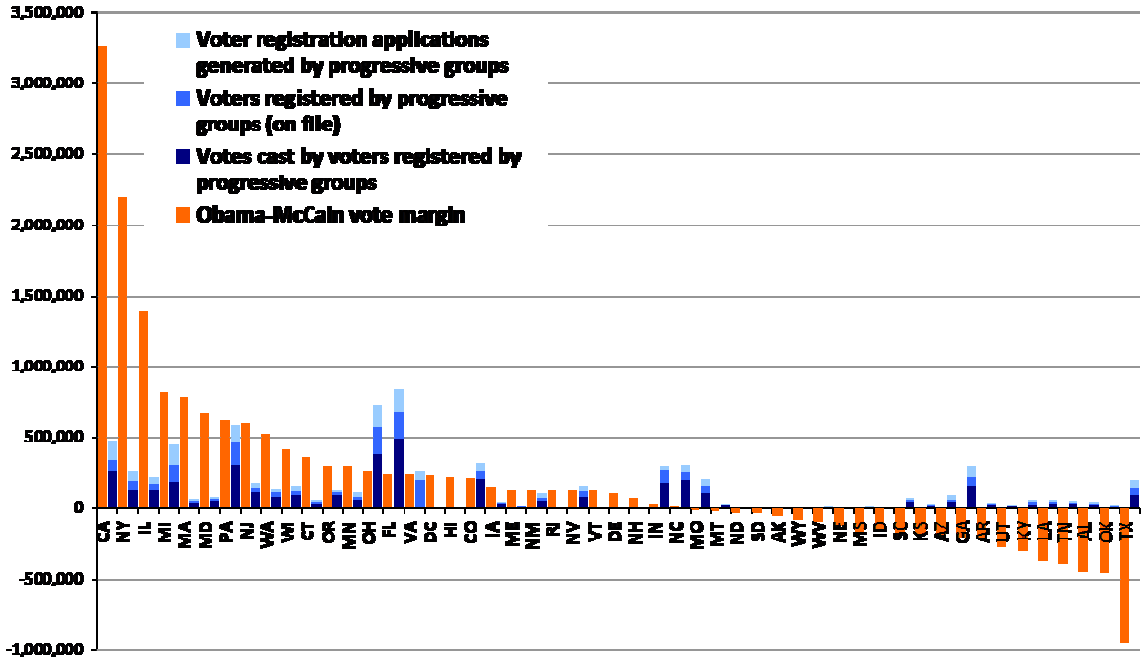
Figure 17: Footprint of 2008 Progressive Voter Registrations, 2008



These figures alone, however, aren't enough evidence to conclude that voter registration activity had a quantifiable effect. By comparing the total number of registrations in each state to the number of votes that Obama won (or lost) by, we can compare the amount of registration activity that occurred in a state to the margin of victory.

Figure 18, below, compares Obama's victory margin (represented by the orange bars) in each state to the total number of applicants generated by progressives (represented by the stacked blue bars). The stacked blue bars are broken into three categories – the dark blue bars represent votes cast by individuals who were newly registered by progressives groups; the medium blue bars represent voters registered by progressive groups (plus the dark blue bars); and the light blue bars represent the number of total registrations generated by progressive groups (plus the bars stacked below it).

Figure 18: Progressive Registration Applications vs. Obama Victory Margin, 2008

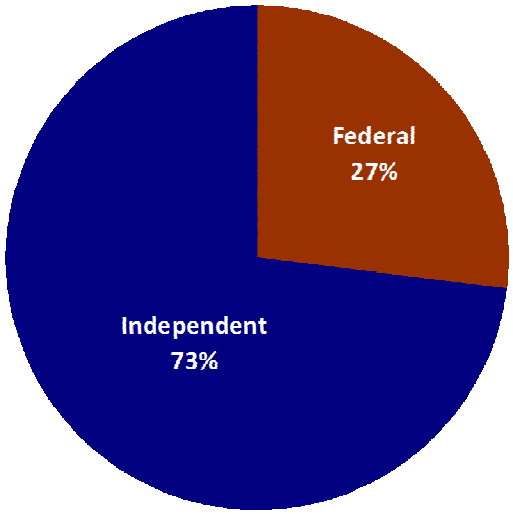

3,500,000
3,000,000
2,500,000
2,000,000
1,500,000
1,000,000
500,000
0
-500,000
-1,000,000
Voter registration applications generated by progressive groups
Voters registered by progressive groups (on file)
Votes cast by voters registered by progressive groups
Obama-McCain vote margin
CA NY IL MI MA MD PA NJ WA WI CT OR MN OH FL VA DC HI CO IA ME NM RI NV VT DE NH IN NC MO MT ND SD AK WY WV NE MS ID SC KS AZ GA AR UT KY LA TN AL OK TX

Wherever a dark blue bar is taller then an orange bar, the number of votes cast by new voters who were registered by progressives exceeded the margin of victory in that state. This occurred in four states: OH, FL, IN, and NC. By implication, this suggests that the additional voters generated through progressive voter registration activities may have been essential to an Obama victory in that state. Although it is certain that not every voter registered by a progressive organization voted for Obama, if we assume that only 60% of them did, the net vote gain for Obama is still greater than the margin of

victory in both North Carolina and Indiana (i.e., by giving 60% to Obama and 40% to McCain, the extra 20% is still more then the vote margin).

Of the 5.5 million people whose registrations made it to the voter rolls (described in Figure 19), 3.8 million people turned out to vote. Of these, independent groups registered 73% and federal groups registered 27%.

Figure 19: Breakdown of Votes Cast by Progressive Registration Applicants



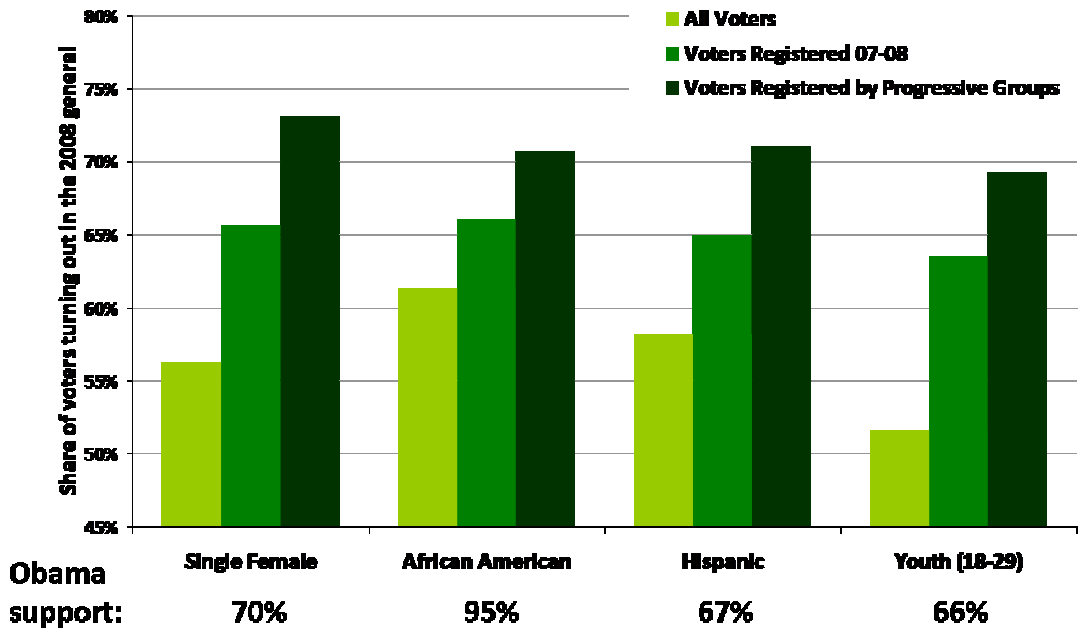
Total Votes from Progressive Registrants: 3,791,053

Key targets of the progressive efforts this cycle were focused on the so called 'Rising American Electorate', composed of African Americans, single women, Hispanics, and young people (age 18 – 29). The successful galvanization of these audiences has traditionally led to progressive success. All of these populations are growing relative to other demographic groups, and all are trending more heavily than others toward voting for and supporting progressive candidates and causes. The turnout levels of these voters will be a crucial factor in upcoming midterm and off-year elections.

Figure 20, below, illustrates progressive efforts among these key constituencies. The light green bars represent the turnout of all registered voters in that constituency; the medium green bars represent the turnout of all voters who registered in the 2008 cycle; and the dark green bars indicate turnout of all voters registered by progressive organizations.

Proprietary & Confidential, Not for Distribution

Figure 20: Rising American Electorate and Progressive Registration Efforts, 2008



Source: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research on behalf of Women's Voices. Women Vote, January/February 2009.

The data in Figure 20 supports the notion that registering people to vote has a positive effect on turnout. The stark differences between the light green bars and medium green bars indicate that people who registered to vote during this election cycle turned out at much greater rates than their general demographic group. Furthermore, the dark green bars suggest that people registered by progressive groups generally turn out at higher rates than those who were not registered by progressive groups. This might be because progressive groups that do registration work often operate GOTV activities that complement their registration efforts. Another possible explanation for the increased turnout is that progressives successfully targeted people for their registration efforts who were more likely to vote once registered.

SEIU: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Appendix contains a full PowerPoint slide deck of SEIU's data, including some slides that were generated but not referenced in this document. Finally, all questions, comments and suggestions for improvements in future reports are welcome. Catalist is focused on making improvements to our data load, storage, and measurement capacities to better support the entire progressive community as we move forward together.

SEIU Activity Report[30]

- Over 5.2 million direct contacts were made to almost 4.5 million voters.
- 2.5 million pieces of response data was collected from over 1.2 million voters.
- Areas that received contact from SEIU correlated with a strong pattern of increased Democratic performance, compared to 2004.
- SEIU's targeting efforts look very similar to those of overall progressive efforts in Catalist's database, with a greater focus on high-turnout individuals.
- Large amount of persuasion targets: contact to high-turnout, less-partisan individuals was more intense then that of all progressive groups.
- SEIU used high concentrations of live phone calls (64%) and in-person contact (24%) to target voters. In both cases, this is approximately 50% more then the average (as a percent) of all progressives.
- In Indiana, over 40% of all independent progressive contacts (not including federal) were unique to SEIU. In Virginia, over 35% of all independent progressive contacts were unique to SEIU. SEIU also had large shares of unique contacts in other highly contested states, including New Mexico (over 30%), New Hampshire (over 15%), and Oregon and Colorado (over 10%).
- SEIU's unique contacts were a significant portion of all progressive contacts (including federal and independent groups) in key states, including Virginia (20%), New Mexico (13%) and Colorado (8.5%).
- Correlation is clear that SEIU members turned out at higher rates then non-members[31].

[30] All contact and response information are based on SEIU data loaded into the Catalist database from VAN. This does not include data that was uploaded directly to Catalist by SEIU partner organizations.

[31] Based on the Catalist Voting Propensity Model, binned evenly within each state.

SEIU 2008 ACTIVITY REPORT

SEIU: Overview

Based on SEIU's data loaded at Catalist, SEIU made over 5.2 million direct contacts to almost 4.5 million voters during the 2008 presidential election cycle. In addition, SEIU received approximately 2.5 million pieces of response data from over 1.2 million voters.

Figure 21, below, provides detail on where this contact work occurred and how it occurred. The State Breakdown table indicates that SEIU' activities were focused in 10 key battleground states. All of these states saw critical progressive victories on Election Day, some by very narrow margins. The Channel Breakdown pie chart illustrates how this contact was made. It shows that 88% of SEIU's activities were done via person-to-person communication, either by a live phone call (64%) or in-person interaction (24%). Person-to-person interaction is generally considered the most effective means of contact and represented the largest portion of SEIU's activities.

Figure 21: SEIU Program Description

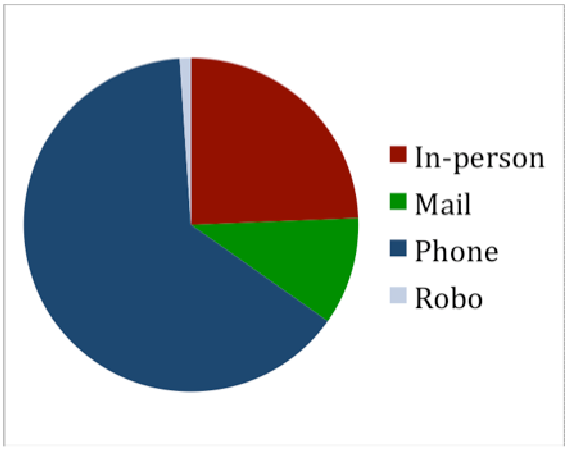
Contacts: 5,273,814 total
4,434,427 distinct

Responses: 2,474,938 total
1,244,569 distinct

Top 10 States for Contact

Rank	State	Count
1	Virginia	1,245,018
2	Colorado	881,522
3	Pennsylvania	469,348
4	Ohio	381,119
5	New Mexico	244,897
6	New Hampshire	191,870
7	Michigan	187,224
8	Indiana	183,420
9	Florida	179,264
10	Minnesota	175,796

Channel Breakdown of Contact



This report will summarize SEIU' voter contact activities in the 2008 election cycle – as recorded in the Catalist database. All contact and response

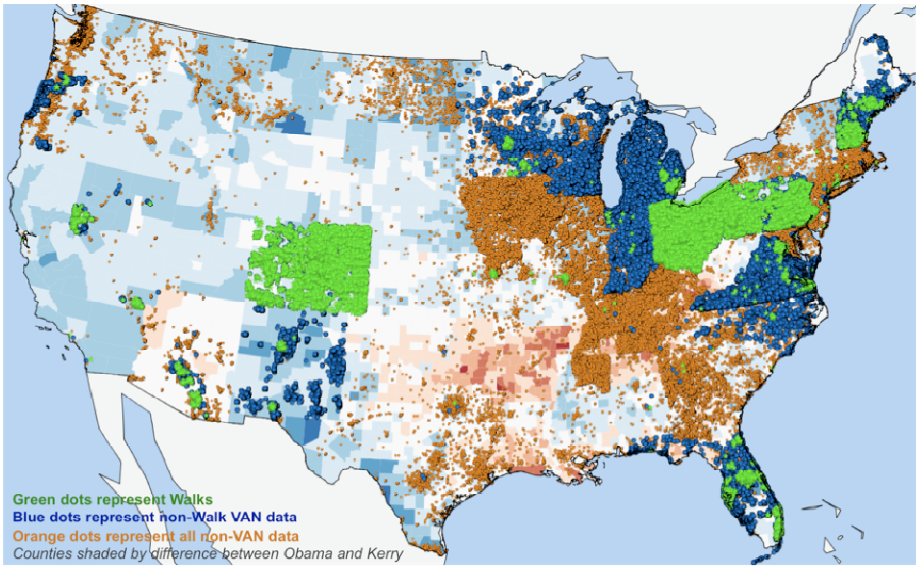
information are based on SEIU data loaded into the Catalist database. This data was used to provide factual results on the scope of SEIU's activities. While this report may suggest correlational relationships between SEIU's activities and actual election outcomes, to be clear, these should not be interpreted as causal. We cannot know causality. We can only know correlation. But with multivariate regression and convergence across multiple approaches we can get ever closer to causality. This is because there are always alternate interpretations. The only way to isolate causality is a truly random-assignment experiment which involves a treatment group and a control group. We are glad that Catalist's infrastructure is supporting an ever-growing body of research on this, led by the Analyst Institute.

Furthermore, even as we are confident that the analyses below shed light on the effects of various programs, we are also aware that these analyses are incomplete and partial. We will discuss the specific limitations of the analyses as we go, but would highlight two general caveats from the start – the need to recognize that programs often operate in very different environments (different "on the ground" realities) and that programs often have very different costs. These differences in context are often hard to measure, and cost data are often unavailable to us.

SEIU: Footprint

The map in Figure 22 illustrates the geographic scope of SEIU's contact work. It displays the overarching footprint of SEIU's activities during the 2008 cycle. Each dot represents a contact made by SEIU, and the color represents how that contact was made. The green dots represent contacts made by walks, the blue dots represent non-walk VAN data, and the orange dots represent all non-VAN data. The blue and red shades, similar to Figure 1, indicate differences in performance between Obama and Kerry. Obama performed better than Kerry in counties shaded blue, while Kerry outperformed Obama in counties shaded red; darker shades indicate a more superior performance by that candidate. The emerging pattern reveals strong correlation between Democratic performance in areas with concentrated contact work.

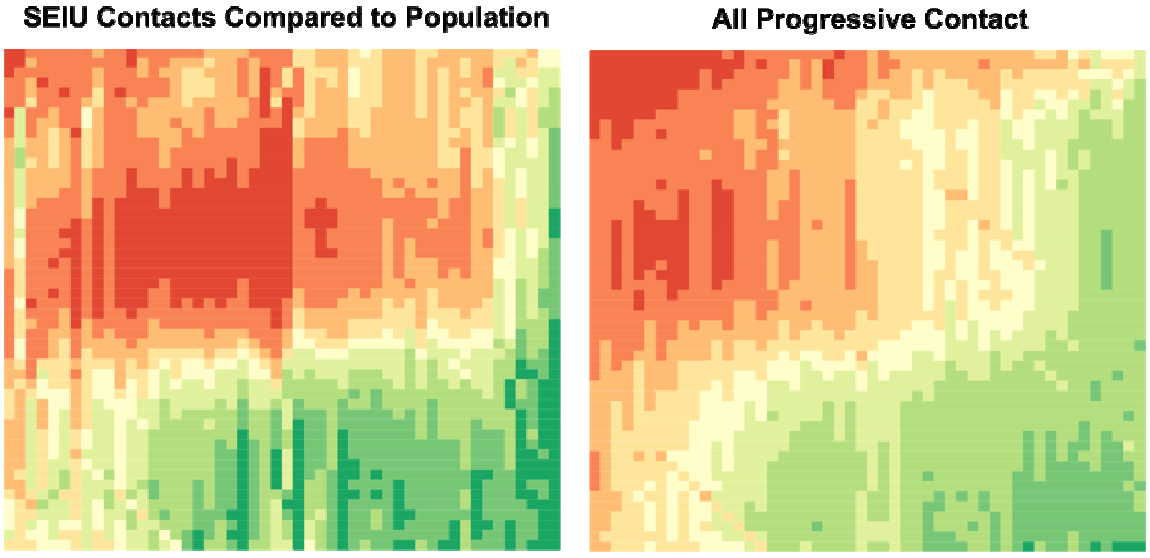
Figure 22: SEIU Total Contact, 2008


Green dots represent Walks
Blue dots represent non-Walk VAN data
Orange dots represent all non-VAN data
Counties shaded by difference between Obama and Kerry

SEIU: Targeting

As discussed in the national report, voter contact was more targeted in the 2008 election cycle than in prior cycles. This created new opportunities in progressive voter contact activity. The heat maps in Figure 23, below, show how SEIU utilized this new capability. It compares SEIU's targeting to all progressive targeting.

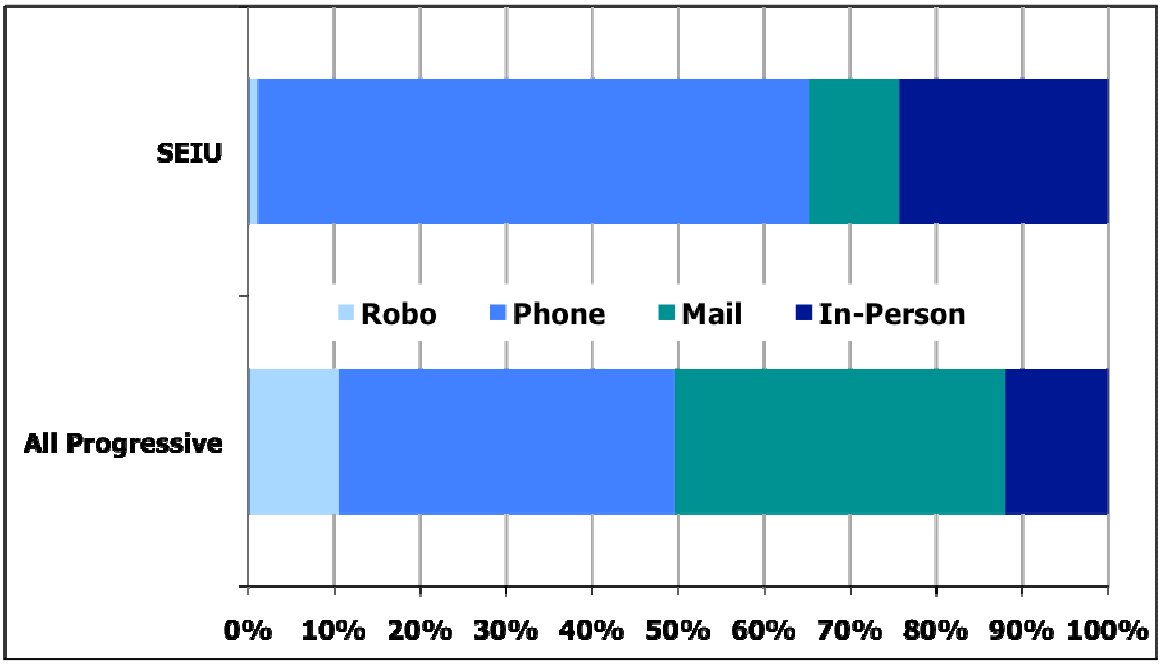
Figure 23: SEIU Targeting vs. All Progressive Targeting



SEIU's targeting efforts look very similar to those of overall progressive efforts in Catalist's database, with a greater focus on high-turnout individuals. This is especially noticeable among high-turnout independents. These individuals appear to be good persuasion targets, as they are largely undecided for which candidate to vote for and are highly likely to turn out to vote.

Now that we've seen whom SEIU targeted, let's look at how they were targeted, shown below in Figure 24. Here, we can see that SEIU's contact was highly focused on live phone calls (64%) and in-person contact (24%). In both cases, this is approximately 50% more then the average (as a percent) of all progressives. Studies suggest that in-person contact is the most effective means of GOTV[32].

Figure 24: Percent of 2008 Contacts, by Channel of Contact



SEIU: Contact & Turnout

Unique Contact

Unique contact refers to individuals whose only progressive contact occurred through SEIU. This is a critical component of any GOTV strategy. It avoids accidental overlapping contact with other organizations and consequently

[32] Gerber, Alan & Green, Don. "Get Out The Vote: How To Increase Voter Turnout." The Brookings Institution. Washington DC. 2004.

reduces the risk of diminishing returns on activities. Figures 26 and 27, below, show that SEIU had a significant amount of contact that was unique, all of which occurred in key swing states.

Figure 27, below, compares the share of unique SEIU contacts to all independent groups (not including federal). Many of these states were won by the narrowest of margins, including Indiana and Virginia. In Indiana, over 40% of all independent contacts were unique to SEIU. In Virginia, over 35% of all independent progressive contacts were unique to SEIU. SEIU also had large shares of unique contacts in other highly contested states, including New Mexico (over 30%), New Hampshire (over 15%), and Oregon and Colorado (over 10%).

Figure 25: Share of Individuals in Each State Contacted by SEIU, Independent Groups or Both

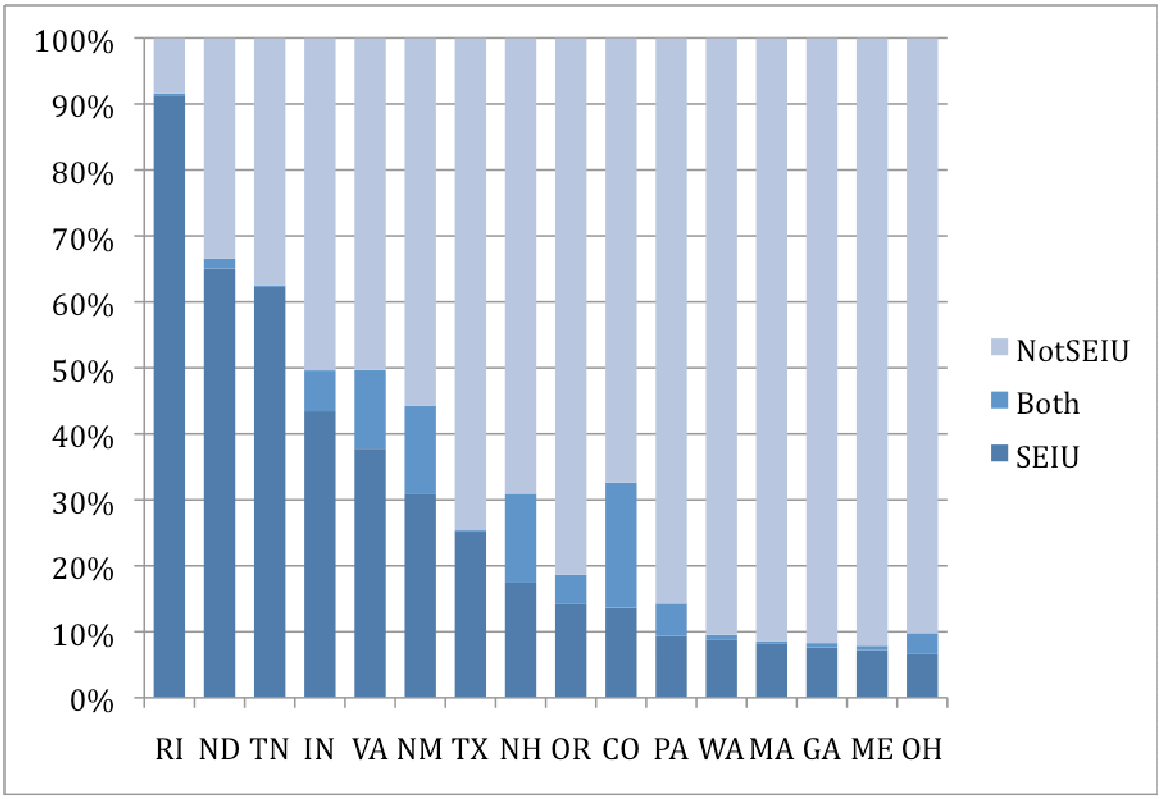
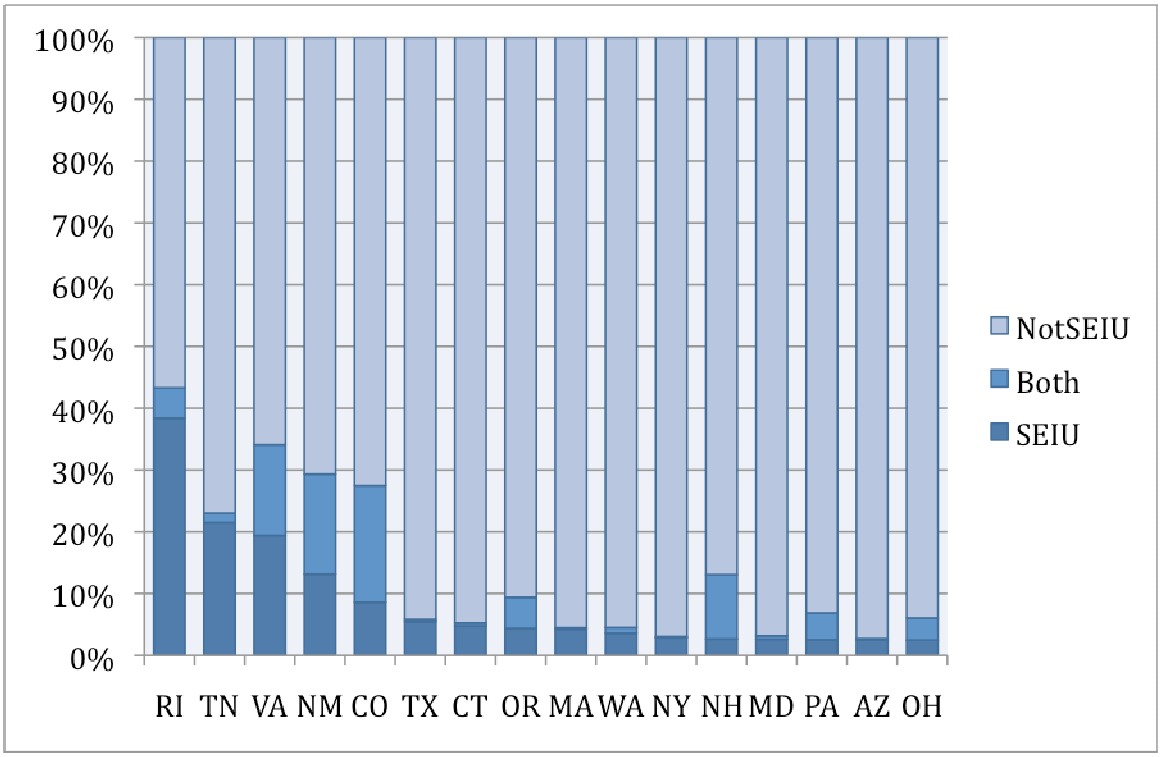


Figure 27, below, compares SEIU's unique contacts to all progressive organizations (including federal and independent groups). Similar to Figure 26, Figure 27 indicates that SEIU's unique contacts were a significant portion of all progressive contacts in key states, including Virginia (20%), New Mexico (13%) and Colorado (8.5%).

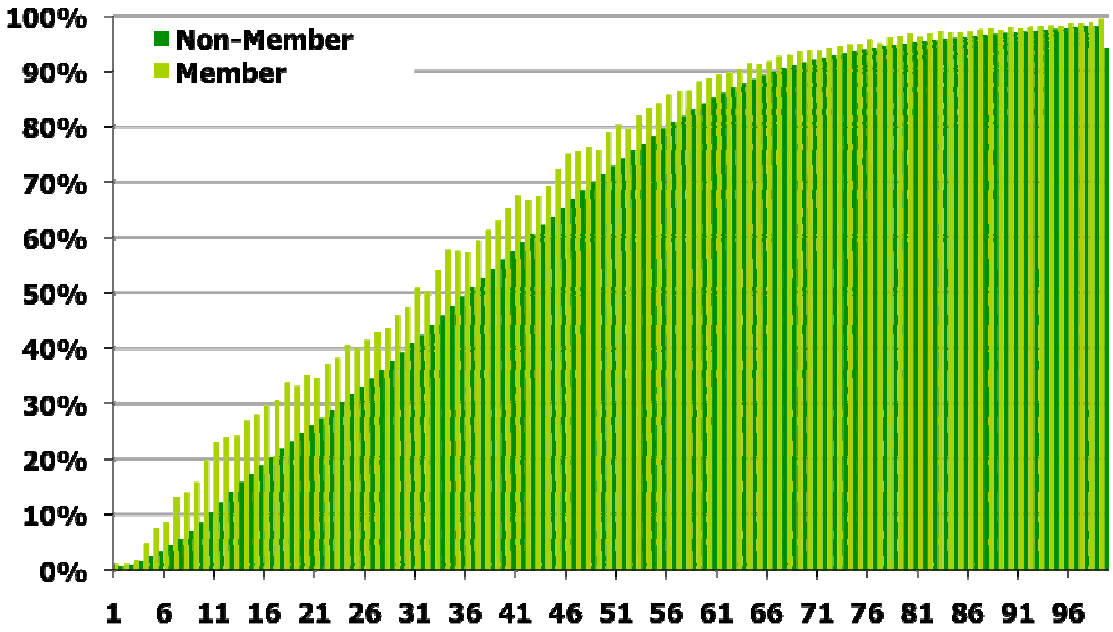
Figure 26: Share of Individuals in Each State Contacted by SEIU, All Other Groups (Independent and Federal), or Both



Turnout

One way to gauge the effects of SEIU's work is to assess the actual turnout rates of the people it contacted. Figure 25, below, compares actual turnout rates between SEIU members and non-members. It is important to note that the nature of Figure 25 inherently favors individuals who are likely to vote. The results reflect people who have been identified as reachable targets by Catalist. Similarly, low contact may indicate that someone is not *able* to vote, for whatever reason (including change of address, illness, death, etc.). As a result, the increases seen in the chart, below, may be attributed to other causes. More importantly, it likely overstates the actual effect of any contact work and should not be used as a measure of the actual impact. We encourage the widespread use of controlled experiments to complement this data in order to further understand the results.

Figure 27: 2008 Turnout by Catalist Vote Propensity Score and Contact by SEIU and Partners



Correlation is clear that SEIU members turned out at higher rates then non-members[33]. These results compliment the heat map in Figure 23, which indicates that the majority of SEIU's targets were directed at individuals who were likely to vote. Taken together, this suggests that the targeting model used by SEIU was not only implemented effectively, but was accurate as well. Whether these voters would have turned out in any case without contact, can only be determined through tests against control groups.

[33] Based on the Catalist Voting Propensity Model, binned evenly within each state.

APPENDIX

Selected Catalist Clients, 2007 - 2008

360jmg
720 Strategies
ACORN
Ambrosino, Muir & Hansen
America Votes
American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations
Anzalone-Liszt Research
ATLAS Project
Benenson Strategy Group
Bennett, Petts & Normington
Bora Planning
Bynum, Thompson, Ryer
California Democratic Congressional Caucus
California Labor Federation
California Latino Legislative Caucus
Center for Civic Participation - Florida
Center for Civic Participation - Michigan
Center for Civic Participation - Ohio
Center for Civic Participation - Pennsylvannia
Center for Civic Policy - New Mexico
Center for Community Change
Change to Win
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
Clean Water Action
Coloradans for Fairness and Equality
Colorado Progressive Coalition
ConnCAN
Defenders of Wildlife
Democracy In Action
Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee
Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee
Democrats.com
Education Voters Institute
EMILY's List
Faith in Public Life
Feldman Group
FieldWorks
For Maryland For Our Future
Global Strategy Group
Greenberg Quinlan Rosner
Grove Insight
Hamilton Campaigns
Human Rights Campaign
Lake Research Partners
League of Conservation Voters
Mack | Crounse Group
Maine People's Alliance
Mark Warner for U.S. Senate
Mellman Group
Mission Control
Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures
Missouri Progressive Vote Coalition
MSHC Partners
NARAL - Pro-Choice America Foundation
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Council of La Raza / Democracia USA
National Education Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
New Organizing Institute
North Carolina Blueprint
Obama for America
Ohio Democratic Party
OMP Direct
Oregon Bus Project
Partnership Project
Peter D. Hart Research Associates
Planned Parenthood
Polling Consortium
Progressive American Fund - New Jersey
Progressive Future / MoveOn.org
Project New West
Rock the Vote
Service Employees International Union
Sierra Club
Strategy Group
Texas Democratic Trust
USAction
Wake Up Wal-Mart / UFCW
Washington Bus Project
Wellstone Action Fund
Winning Connections
Women's Voices. Women Vote.